WHAT HAS RACE GOT TO DO WITH IT? UNRAVELING THE ROLE OF RACIOETHNICITY IN JOB SEEKERS' REACTIONS TO SITE VISITS

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Racioethnic minorities have constituted a substantial portion of new labor market entrants in the past decade (Fullerton & Toossi, 2001). Yet, the recruitment literature has not attended to issues of racioethnicity, and more specifically, how racioethnic groups may differ in the factors used to determine job acceptance intentions after site visits. This article aims to rectify that omission by providing a theoretical model explaining how organizational and surrounding community attributes differentially affect the decision-making process of minority and majority group job applicants. Several individual difference moderators (i.e., racioethnic identity, social dominance orientation, other-group orientation, and perceived job opportunities) also are discussed in terms of their potential influence on job acceptance intentions. The article concludes with coverage of relevant research and practical implications of the racioethnic model of site visit reactions.

Minority recruitment has become more of an organizational imperative in recent years (Doverspike, Taylor, Shultz, & McKay, 2000). Several reasons for greater efforts on the part of firms to attract minority job applicants include (a) attempts to cover projected labor shortages, (b) avoidance of legal scrutiny, (c) enhanced organizational image as a fair employer, (d) increased access and legitimacy among minority consumers, and (e) increased market share (McKay & Avery, 2005). In spite of this growing interest in minority recruitment, little theoretical development has occurred concerning later stages of recruitment, namely, during the site visit.

Site visits typically provide extensive contact between job applicants and organizational representatives, with implications for continued applicant interest in and attraction to available positions. As such, they are useful platforms for applicants to confirm (or disconfirm) their initial perceptions about firms based on exposure to earlier recruitment activities and materials (e.g., meetings with recruiters, recruitment brochures, etc.). Because job seekers' perceptions of site visits are significantly related to eventual job choice (Turban, Campion, & Eyring, 1995), mismanagement of site visits may be detrimental to recruitment efforts (Fink, Bauer, & Campion, 1994). What constitutes mismanagement, however, depends on the job seeker, in that certain factors are apt to be more important to some job seekers than others. Concerning minority recruitment, the fact that they are underrepresented in most firms (Fullerton & Toossi, 2001) should result in diversity cues playing a greater role in their site visit evaluations (Thomas & Wise, 1999). Unfortunately, the organizational behavior/ human resource management (OBHRM) literature does little to explain how applicant racioethnicity might affect subsequent reactions to site visits.

Consequently, the present article draws upon several divergent literatures to develop a theory of how racioethnicity influences applicants' responses to diversity cues encountered during site visits and how these cues impact their intentions to accept job offers. In addition, we provide several novel, testable propositions that may both guide and stimulate future research in this area. This article extends the knowledge base in several key ways. For instance, we know that diversity factors probably elicit racioethnic differences in reactions to site visits (Thomas & Wise, 1999). What is unknown, however, is which factors drive such differences and what these differences look like. In addition, much of what is known about racioethnic effects on recruitment pertains to the generating applicants phase of recruitment (Barber, 1998). Given that organizations continue to devote more attention and resources to recruiting racioethnically diverse job applicants (Digh, 1999), it is imperative that we understand how racioethnicity influences recruitment beyond mere initial applicant attraction. Many things could take place after applicants apply to elicit racioethnic differences in applicants' continued interest in positions (e.g., see Ryan, Sacco, McFarland, & Kriska, 2000). In short, if organizations are to reap the rewards of their diversity recruitment expenditures, they must first understand how job seekers from different racioethnic groups vary in their responses to the racial conditions encountered both within and outside of firms.

Before beginning, we must acknowledge a number of key boundary conditions. First, the model described here is decidedly perceptual in nature and is approached from the job applicant perspective. As such, we

do not claim that applicants' perceptions of job openings reflect objective reality. Nevertheless, this concern is tempered by the fact that individual perceptions are more influential than objective conditions in decision making (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). Second, we focus on Barber's (1998) second stage of recruitment, maintaining applicant status, during which applicants search more intensely to acquire in-depth information about job openings and firms. For the sake of parsimony, we limit our discussion to the site visit portion of this stage. The site visit has received very little research attention (Breaugh & Starke, 2000) despite providing "a longer and more intense applicant–company interaction than do other stages" (Taylor & Bergman, 1987, p. 273). Furthermore, Fink et al. (1994) found that 75% of job seekers altered their job acceptance intentions, positively or negatively, following site visits. Third, we emphasize the role of site visit characteristics that are expected to elicit racioethnic (minority–White) differences in their effects on applicants' job acceptance intentions. Accordingly, we downplay the role of universally appealing objective factors such as pay, opportunity to use skills, the nature of work performed, and so on. Although this makes our model somewhat less comprehensive, it should be noted that three studies (Osborn, 1990; Taylor & Bergmann, 1987; Turban et al., 1995) have shown that perceptions of objective factors are unrelated to job choice. This is because job seekers utilize minimum standards for objective factors when deciding to accept or reject site visit invitations, thus restricting their variance. Finally, we integrate typical societal "givens" into our theoretical development. For instance, based upon existing evidence, we assume that the "typical" firm has low minority representation (Doverspike et al., 2000), and that Whites form the numerical majority (population-wise) in most regions (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002) and the largest proportion of middle- to upper-class socioeconomic strata (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). Thus, our model has greater validity and practical relevance by eliminating unrealistic conditions that job seekers are unlikely to encounter (e.g., a firm with only Hispanic employees located in an all Hispanic, upper-class U.S. setting).

In the sections that follow, we discuss why racioethnicity needs to be incorporated into discussions of the site visit and introduce our model linking racioethnicity to job acceptance intentions. Subsequently, several individual difference moderators expected to influence racioethnic differences in site visit reactions are described.

Relevance of Racioethnicity to Site Visit Reactions

We use Cox's (2004) term racioethnicity to refer to "biologically and/or culturally distinct groups" and focus on the effects of racial (biological) and ethnic (cultural) group membership on reactions to job opening

attributes and job acceptance intentions (p. 126). The term minority is used to refer to Blacks, Hispanics, and Asian Americans, which are the three largest non-White racioethnic groups in the United States (U.S. Census, 2002). A number of theoretical perspectives are useful in illustrating why racioethnicity is pertinent in the formation of job acceptance intentions, which we define as applicants' reported plans to accept or reject a job offer should the organization extend one. Job choice is not utilized as a criterion because our model uses applicant perceptions as the frame of reference, and job choice is not entirely job applicant determined (i.e., the organization must first extend an offer). Acceptance intentions are important because they predict actual job choice decisions in cases when a job offer is made (Cable & Judge, 1996; Turban et al., 1995). We focus our discussion upon three theories that are particularly germane to our model: (a) social identity, (b) schema, and (c) signaling theories.

Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory (SIT) purports that people categorize themselves and others into identity groups such as racioethnicity, gender, age, and religion (Stryker, 1968; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). According to Ashforth and Mael (1989), social classification serves the purposes of (a) helping people to define others, usually in terms of the prototypical attributes associated with a group, and (b) allowing people to define themselves in juxtaposition to other social identity groups. This second purpose involves an individual's self-categorization in terms of his/her personal identity (i.e., unique personal characteristics such as competencies, values, etc.) and group identity, which refers to one's perception of affiliation with and belongingness to a particular social identity group.

SIT scholars note a number of features with import to our model. First, people are motivated to maintain a favorable impression of their in-group. Because the fate of the group as a whole has implications for one's feelings about the self, in-group success is psychologically rewarding to group members (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hogg & Terry, 2000). Accordingly, group members are likely to espouse values that serve in-group interests, such as the value of diversity described later. Second, individuals choose activities and seek out environments that affirm their identity, especially in response to identity threats such as racial discrimination (Ethier & Deaux, 1994; Saylor & Aries, 1999). A number of studies have chronicled the deleterious effects of pervasive racial discrimination on minority health and well-being (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999; Gee, 2002; James, Lovato, & Khoo, 1994; Utsey, Chae, Brown, & Kelly, 2002). Third, identity groups are relational, and as such, members are aware of the position of their in-group relative to out-groups. For instance, the category "minority

group" is only meaningful in contradistinction to the category "majority group" (Tajfel & Turner, 1985).

The three points concerning SIT imply differences in the responses of minority and White job seekers to organizational conditions encountered during site visits. Regarding the first point, though both will benefit psychologically from seeing in-group members during site visits (particularly those in influential jobs), the statistical probability of doing so varies across the groups. Often, minorities are poorly represented and relegated to lower-status positions (Fullerton & Toossi, 2001; Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990; Ragins, 1997). Thus, concerns about in-group representation in general, and in higher positions in particular, should be more relevant to minorities. Taken together, the second and third points suggest that minorities, who are more likely to encounter racism than their White counterparts (Crocker & Major, 1989; Ridgeway, 1991), will report higher value for diversity and seek work in settings wherein racioethnic discrimination is minimized. Kossek and Zonia (1993) defined value for diversity as an individual's attitudes concerning organizational efforts to increase demographic heterogeneity. Their research, and that of others (e.g., Mor Barak, Cherin, & Berkman, 1998) indicated that, relative to majority group members, minorities report significantly higher value for diversity. Because the White majority occupies the dominant position in society, its members should be less attentive to racioethnic concerns when forming job acceptance intentions.

Schema Theory

Fiske and Taylor (1991) define a schema as "a cognitive structure that represents knowledge about a concept or type of stimulus, including its attributes and the relations among those attributes" (p. 98). Schemas facilitate information processing by enabling individuals to use prior knowledge or beliefs in perceiving people, events, and objects. A number of schema categories exist, but those that are most relevant to the current discussion are person schemas and self-schemas. Person schemas are an individual's conception of a target person's traits and predispositions. Self-schemas entail a person's self-description; particular traits can be self-schematic (reflective) or aschematic (not reflective) of an individual.

Schema theory applies to our model because schemas affect how people encode information (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). A number of elements affecting diversity perceptions involve judgments of physical cues such as racioethnicity and social status. Schema theory suggests that physical characteristics act as schematic labels that people use to form impressions of others (i.e., person schemas) based on the assumed possession of certain traits, as in stereotyping (Devine, 1989; Wittenbrink, Judd, &

Park, 1997). In addition, schemas are expected to help applicants extract meaning from indirect diversity cues experienced during site visits, such as the nature of social treatment received from firm employees. For instance, a Hispanic job applicant may attribute cold, rude behaviors from several White employees to racism, whereas the same behaviors from Hispanic personnel are likely to elicit an altogether different attribution. The attributional ambiguity of this situation should activate the use of schema-based information processing to explain the ill treatment. Specifically, an awareness of historical discriminatory treatment could lead to attributions of racism to account for the behaviors of the White employees (Feagin, 1991; Utsey et al., 2002). The key point is that, because minorities tend to be underrepresented in firms, it is less likely that they will encounter racioethnically similar organizational members. As their racioethnic identity becomes increasingly salient, there is a greater probability that they will interpret social interactions with firm representatives in racioethnic terms. In contrast, schema-driven information processing should be less important for encoding more direct and unambiguous diversity cues such as the number of minority employees working in high-level positions.

Self-schemas also should have effects on inference and evaluation. For example, a woman who perceives herself as pro-Black is likely to attend to and encode race-relevant information, and interpret events (especially uncertain ones) in terms of racioethnicity because this category is used frequently and is chronically accessible (Bargh & Pratto, 1986; Park & Judd, 1989).

Signaling Theory

Signaling theory (Rynes, 1991; Spence, 1973) states that job seekers often possess incomplete information about available job openings. To reduce the uncertainty associated with this lack of information, they interpret the available information about organizations (cues) using cognitive rules of thumb (heuristics) designed to simplify the decision-making process (Highhouse & Hoffman, 2001). For instance, a job seeker that has never met any employees at a company may interpret the company recruiter's characteristics as symbolic of those of the typical employee (Turban, Forret, & Hendrickson, 1998). Thus, in addition to the explicit information that job seekers collect regarding organizations, there is implicit information that they use to surmise unknown firm characteristics that are germane to their decision-making process.

Here, we reason that racioethnicity will affect the extent that job seekers attend to information that reflects firms' diversity climates. Kossek and Zonia (1993) defined diversity climate as the extent that firms "(1)

generally value efforts to increase the representation of diverse groups, and (2) believe that individuals who are White women or racioethnic minority men and women in their work group are as qualified as White men" (p. 63). Mor Barak et al. (1998) further proposed that organizational perceptions of diversity consist of two factors, the fairness of organizational procedures and the extent that minorities are integrated into the work setting. In our view, Mor Barak et al.'s (1998) reasoning best reflects the conception of diversity climate perceptions expressed in our model. Accordingly, we define diversity climate perceptions as applicants' impressions that a firm adheres to fair personnel practices and the degree minorities are socially integrated into the work setting. Given that minorities place greater importance on diversity than do majority members when seeking employment (Ng & Burke, 2005; Thomas & Wise, 1999), we expect minority job seekers to be especially attentive to organizational conditions that denote a firm's diversity climate.

In sum, these three theoretical perspectives (SIT, schema theory, and signaling theory) indicate that racioethnicity has potential relevance to site visit reactions. Empirical researchers have attempted to extend existing theories (e.g., SIT, relational demography, and the similarity-attraction paradigm) to explain applicant attraction to firms (e.g., Avery, 2003, Avery, Hernandez, & Hebl, 2004; Goldberg, 2003). Singularly, however, these theories do not fully explain how racioethnically different applicants may vary in their site visit reactions. First, they do not consider how traditional and continuing intergroup differences in numerical and hierarchical representation might affect site visit evaluations. Undoubtedly, historical patterns of discrimination, in which minority groups more consistently encounter racial discrimination relative to Whites (Nkomo, 1992), should lead to variability by racioethnicity in how applicants interpret diversity cues encountered during site visits. Second, these theories fail to account for the skewed under representation of minorities relative to Whites in most firms. Because of the restricted range of minority representation in various contexts (i.e., firms and communities), a small increase in this variable likely will have larger effects on minorities than Whites.

Due to the inability of existing theory to fully describe potential racioethnic differences in responses to diversity cues relevant to site visits, we created a racioethnic model of site visit reactions. Next, we integrate and extend theories from the organizational behavior, social psychological, sociological, and migration literatures to formulate our model explicating racioethnic differences in site visit reactions.

A Racioethnic Model of Site Visit Reactions

In America, most minorities become aware at an early age (either vicariously or through their own experiences) that their racioethnicity

represents a potential career obstacle due to the persistence of discrimination (Constantine, Erickson, Banks, & Timberlake, 1998). Paired with an inherent desire for identity affirmation (Tajfel & Turner, 1985), this knowledge of inequitable labor practices leads minorities to form schema and heuristics designed to detect potentially discriminatory situations so that they may be avoided. In addition, minorities' concerns about racioethnic discrimination extend to firms' surrounding communities. Not only does pervasive racism compromise minorities' physical and mental well-being (Branscombe et al., 1999; Gee, 2002; James et al., 1994; Utsey et al., 2002), but in extreme instances, racially motivated violence can prove dangerous for these individuals (Green, Strolovitch, & Wong, 1998). In the context of site visits, these issues imply that, relative to majority group members, minority job seekers are apt to pay greater attention to and be more influenced by cues that could be indicative of an organization's and its surrounding community's diversity climate. Our model attempts to explain how these cues disproportionately influence the job acceptance intentions of minority job seekers relative to the majority group. Because minority groups share similar experiences of discrimination and its negative effects (Feagin, 1991; Hein, 2000; Utsey et al., 2002), we expect them to show similar responsiveness to diversity cues encountered during site visits.

Ostensibly, one could identify a number of diversity cues present during the site visit (inside and outside of organizations) that could influence job acceptance intentions. Nonetheless, we feel that two are of particular importance: encounter demographics and interracioethnic interaction quality. Encounter demographics refer to the racial group composition of the people met and/or seen during the site visit. At the worksite, for instance, it may be reassuring for minority job seekers to encounter other in-group members. A minority presence within the organization may signal that the organization values diversity and does not discriminate. Likewise, a minority presence in the surrounding community may signal that the community values diversity.

Interracioethnic interaction quality is the degree that social interactions between races are perceived as pleasant. Amicable interracioethnic interactions within the firm may signal that employees and management are nondiscriminatory. Similarly, pleasant interracioethnic interactions outside the firm may signal that the surrounding community is inclusive. Both of these issues (encounter demographics and interracioethnic interaction quality), though still potentially important, are less relevant to White job seekers because they are rarely in the numerical minority and are less likely to experience racioethnic discrimination. Evidence suggests that race is not salient to Whites when they are in the numerical majority (Kim-Ju & Liem, 2003), which includes the majority
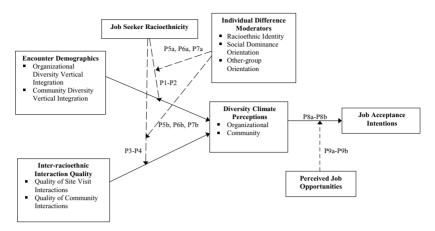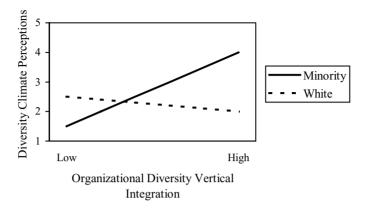
Figure 1: **Racioethnic Model of Job Seekers Site Visit Reactions.**

of employment and surrounding community contexts in the United States.[1]

As shown in Figure 1, the effects of encounter demographics and inter-racioethnic interaction quality on diversity climate perceptions are proposed to differ as a function of the job seeker's racioethnicity. This is because diversity cues such as encounter demographics and interracioethnic interaction quality are more important to minorities (Ng & Burke, 2005; Thomas & Wise, 1999) and, thus, more likely to be influential. In turn, organizational and community diversity climate perceptions are expected to affect the likelihood of accepting a job offer, if extended. Furthermore, because there is considerable within-group variance, several individual difference moderators that could influence the effects of racioethnicity are discussed. The various interrelationships depicted in the figure are summarized in the form of testable propositions where appropriate. Several additional figures (Figures 2–5) provide illustrations of the forms of relationships postulated within our model. With the exception of moderator relationships graphed in Figures 3–5, the relationships summarized in Figure 1 take the form of Figure 2 in which the relationships between site visit factors (i.e., encounter demographics and interracioethnic interaction quality) and diversity climate perceptions are expected to be stronger among minority than White job seekers. We begin with encounter demographics.

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[1]In the comparatively rare instances that White job seekers find themselves in the demographic minority (e.g., minority-owned firms), these factors will exert considerable influence on their job acceptance intentions as well.
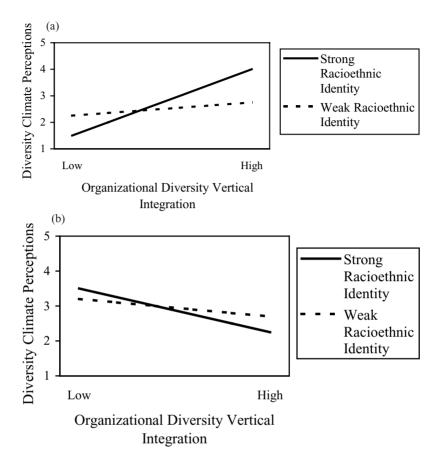
Note. The 1–5 scaling of organizational diversity climate perceptions was arbitrary.

Figure 2: **Job Seeker Racioethnicity × Organizational Diversity Vertical Integration Interaction on Organizational Diversity Climate Perceptions.**

Encounter Demographics

Organizational diversity vertical integration. Barber (1998) stated that "one aspect of the site visit that has surprisingly not been explored is the impact of the demographic composition of organizational members met during the visit on applicant reactions" (p. 79). For our discussion, the proportion of employees seen and/or encountered that are minorities, working at various job levels, is hereafter termed organizational vertical integration (Cox, 1994). A potentially vivid signal of a firm's diversity climate is to actually see or meet a number of minority employees while on site because these individuals signify that a firm truly adheres to staffing policies that encourage workplace diversity (Konrad & Pfeffer, 1991; Mouw, 2002, p. 520). Furthermore, a minority presence may prove particularly symbolic to minority job seekers when the incumbents are from various hierarchical job levels because this suggests favorable advancement opportunities exist for minorities (Avery, 2003; Digh, 1999).

Conversely, the concentration of minority workers in low status positions signifies low vertical integration, which may be indicative of an inequitable opportunity structure, and has negative ramifications for a firm's diversity climate (Cox, 1994). Such structures also negatively affect minority employees' well-being (Forman, 2003). Hence, it is key that job seekers perceive firms as being vertically structurally integrated, meaning that racioethnic diversity can be found at all hierarchical levels of the organization. This logic is conceptually similar to that articulated by
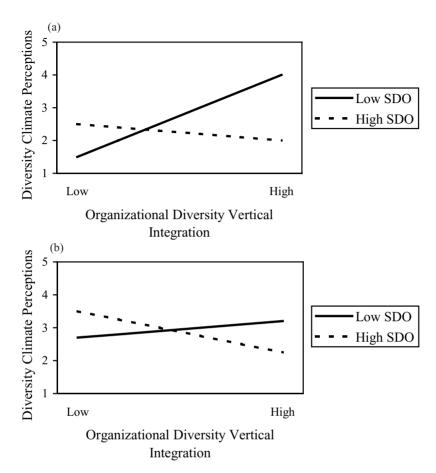
(a)

Diversity Climate Perceptions

Strong
Racioethnic
Identity

Weak Racioethnic
Identity

Low   High

Organizational Diversity Vertical
Integration

(b)

Diversity Climate Perceptions

Strong
Racioethnic
Identity

Weak
Racioethnic
Identity

Low   High

Organizational Diversity Vertical
Integration

Note. The 1–5 scaling of organizational diversity climate perceptions was arbitrary.

Figure 3: **Job Seeker Racioethnicity × Racioethnic Identity ×
Organizational Diversity Vertical Integration Interaction on Organizational
Diversity Perceptions among (a) Minority Job Seekers and (b) White
Job Seekers.**

Lau and Murninghan (1998) in their discussion of demographic faultlines.
They argued that high correlations between demographic group member-
ship and hierarchical status create faultlines that serve to reinforce the
advantaged and disadvantaged positions of majority and minority groups,
respectively. Consequently, in seeking to affirm their identities, minori-
ties likely will avoid pursuing employment in firms where they encounter
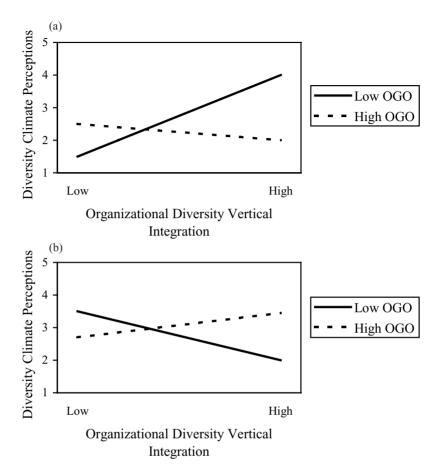potential evidence of racioethnic faultlines.

The vertical integration of minority employees is expected to have less
impact on the diversity climate perceptions of White job seekers for two

Note. The 1–5 scaling of organizational diversity climate perceptions was arbitrary.

Figure 4: **Job Seeker Racioethnicity × Social Dominance Orientation × Organizational Diversity Vertical Integration Interaction on Organizational Diversity Climate Perceptions among (a) Minority Job Seekers and (b) White Job Seekers.**

reasons. First, prior research has shown that Whites report lower value for diversity than minorities, suggesting that the issue is less salient to them (Kossek & Zonia, 1993; Mor Barak et al., 1998). Second, Whites are the most highly represented racioethnic group in most organizations, particularly in powerful positions (Linnehan & Konrad, 1999). As such, they enjoy higher status in firms, with less concern about racioethnic discrimination (and advancement) than minorities. Not surprisingly, White

(a)

Diversity Climate Perceptions (y-axis, scale 1 to 5)

Organizational Diversity Vertical Integration (x-axis, Low to High)

Low OGO
High OGO

(b)

Diversity Climate Perceptions (y-axis, scale 1 to 5)

Organizational Diversity Vertical Integration (x-axis, Low to High)

Low OGO
High OGO

Note. The 1–5 scaling of organizational diversity climate perceptions was arbitrary.

Figure 5: **Job Seeker Racioethnicity × Other Group Orientation × Organizational Diversity Vertical Integration Interaction on Organizational Diversity Climate Perceptions among (a) Minority Job Seekers and (b) White Job Seekers.**

employees also typically report more favorable diversity climate perceptions than do minorities (e.g., Kossek & Zonia, 1993; Mor Barak et al., 1998).

There may be rare circumstances when White applicants pursue job openings at firms in which minorities are in the majority (see Reskin, McBrier, & Kmec, 1999 for discussion of how racioethnic homogeneity in firms is self-perpetuating, regardless of owner racioethnicity). In

such cases, racial salience among Whites would be higher and the proportional representation of Whites relative to minorities in key positions potentially could have greater influence on diversity climate perceptions. In fact, Whites who work in settings where they are numerically scarce sometimes exhibit greater sensitivity to racial issues such as negative stereotyping and poor social acceptance (Mueller, Finley, Iverson, & Price, 1999; Smith & Borgstedt, 1985). Similarly, some White employees respond negatively to increasing racial diversity in workgroups, exhibiting lower team attachment and greater propensity to turnover (Riordan & Shore, 1997; Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992). Although these findings highlight the relevance of organizational diversity vertical integration among Whites in the minority, the rarity of such contexts suggest that this issue will be less relevant given the typical racioethnic proportionality in most firms.

> *Proposition 1*: Job seeker racioethnicity will moderate the effect of perceived organizational diversity vertical integration on organizational diversity climate perceptions. Specifically, the relationship between perceived organizational diversity vertical integration and organizational diversity climate perceptions will be more strongly positive among minority versus White job seekers (see Figure 2 for a graphic depiction).

 Community diversity vertical integration. In addition to being influenced by the demographic composition within organizations, the migration literature suggests that people prefer communities containing higher proportions of their particular racioethnic group. Community diversity vertical integration refers to the perceived proportional representation of a given racioethnic group in the firm's community, across various social classes. The tendency for racioethnic groups to cluster in a given area is explained by the social density hypothesis (SDH; Lau, 1989), which states that high group population density in an area (or context) provides instrumental and social inducements, and increases the sense of connectedness between group members (Bledsoe, Welch, Sigelman, & Combs, 1995; Lau, 1989). Instrumentally, density offers group members information about job opportunities, cultural activities, and so on. Socially, density is associated with increased social support amid group members (Halpern, 1993; Hein, 2000; Shumway & Hall, 1996; Tienda & Wilson, 1992). Among minorities, social support received from network ties buffers in-group members from the negative effects of racioethnic discrimination, thus improving psychological health and well-being (Halpern, 1993; Kuo & Tsai, 1986). We anticipate that racioethnic group population size in a firm's outside community will be of greater importance to minorities because they are lower proportionally in representation than the White majority in most statistical metropolitan areas (SMAs) in the United States (U.S. Census

Bureau, 2000). It is plausible, however, that racioethnic-group population size concerns could become more paramount among Whites who are considering employment options in predominately minority regions such as Detroit or New Orleans (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

Opposing the prediction that job seekers will prefer contexts with high racioethnic-group populations, the visibility discrimination hypothesis (Blalock, 1956) states that racioethnic discrimination is higher in areas with large minority populations. This occurs because Whites perceive high minority population density as threatening to their economic and social well-being (Fossett & Kiecolt, 1989; Quillian, 1996; Taylor, 1998). Such discrimination usually takes the form of heightened occupational segregation of minority groups into low-status jobs (Beggs, Villemez, & Arnold, 1997; Burr, Potter, Galle, & Fossett, 1992). Results from several studies suggest that minorities opt for greater social density nonetheless. For instance, two studies (Shumway & Hall, 1996; Tienda & Wilson, 1992) found that Hispanic migrants were willing to accept lower wages to live in locations with large populations of co-ethnics (i.e., other Hispanics). Others (Gurak & Kritz, 2000; White, Biddlecom, & Guo, 1993) showed that various immigrant groups cluster in locations with large populations of co-ethnics. Finally, Frey (1998) reported that the highest minority population growth from 1990 to 1996 occurred in areas where large proportions of a particular minority group already resided.

For minorities, the preference for in-group social interaction proposed by the SDH must be qualified on the basis of insights gleaned from spatial assimilation theory and research. Spatial assimilation theory (SAT; Massey, 1985) argues that achievement and increased socioeconomic status improve minority group members' opportunities to move into predominately White suburban neighborhoods that offer access to desirable amenities such as high-quality housing, good schools, higher physical safety, and infrequent crime. High achieving minorities often leave neighborhoods with large minority populations (usually located in the downtown districts of most metropolitan areas) that are associated with poor-quality housing and schools, frequent crime, and various other forms of disorder (Sampson & Raudenbush, 1999; Wilson, 1987). According to Hwang and Murdock (1998), SAT suggests that status attainment motives outweigh in-group affiliation preferences, leading upwardly mobile minorities to seek residence in areas with low minority-group populations. A number of studies have supported this reasoning (Hwang & Murdock, 1998; Logan, Alba, & Leung, 1996; White et al., 1993).

To reconcile the competing SDH and SAT perspectives, we offer a bit of a compromise between the two. We posit that minority-group members do prefer to affiliate with co-ethnic others, but they desire that these individuals belong to a social class similar to their own. It should be noted

that we assume that mobile job seekers have higher socioeconomic status and education than those with lower mobility (e.g., Ritchey, 1976). The similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971) purports that people show greater affinity to those perceived as similar to them. Findings reported by Logan, Alba, and Zhang (2002) showed that some affluent members of immigrant groups to the United States chose residence in communities that contained a large proportion of high-status co-ethnics. This is presumably because such areas are perceived to offer hospitable racial conditions and greater proximity to similar others.

Of relevance at this juncture is how minority job seekers gauge the social class of other minority-group members encountered in the firm's community. People infer a target individual's social class and occupation from physical cues such as uniforms, styles of clothing, and personal items such as briefcases or formal business attire (Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Jackman, 1979). The presence of several presumably high social status minority-group members should signal low inequality in the region and hence, favorable racioethnic conditions. Conversely, White individuals are well represented in most U.S. statistical metropolitan areas and there is greater socioeconomic variance among this group (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). This comparatively high availability of prospective social network members and comparatively low incidence of racioethnic discrimination should result in community racial dynamics being less salient to White than to minority job seekers.

> *Proposition 2*: Job seeker racioethnicity will moderate the effect of perceived community diversity vertical integration on community diversity climate perceptions. Specifically, the relationship between perceived community diversity vertical integration on community diversity climate perceptions will be more strongly positive among minority versus White job seekers.

Quality of Interracioethnic Interactions

Quality of site visit interactions. This construct pertains to job seekers' overall perceptions of interpersonal social relations with members of other racioethnic groups during the site visit (across the sum total of interactions). The concern here is whether applicants feel that employees show genuine warmth and friendliness toward them, as expressed by congruent verbal (explicit) and nonverbal (implicit) behaviors. As explained below, a mismatch between explicit and implicit verbal cues leads to more negative perceptions of interaction quality. Recruiters and company representatives are viewed as signals of organizational characteristics, and applicants respond more positively to competent, interested (in candidates), likable, and warm recruiters and site visit hosts in the form of

higher job/organizational attractiveness ratings (Rynes, Bretz, & Gerhart, 1991; Stevens, 1998; Turban et al., 1995) and job choice (Turban et al., 1995). We reason that quality of interactions will have their greatest effect on diversity climate perceptions when these involve encounters with potential coworkers and/or supervisors, as opposed to personnel with whom job seekers will interact infrequently on the job.

For minority job candidates, the bulk of their interactions during site visits will be interracioethnic because Whites form the majority in most firms. Modern or aversive racism theory suggests that some White company personnel may hold a general aversion to minorities. According to the theory, aversive racists consciously espouse egalitarian principles that denounce racioethnic prejudice but harbor a subconscious aversion to racioethnic minorities (Dovidio, Gaertner, Kawakami, & Hodson, 2002; McConahay, 1983). During interactions with minority applicants, individuals who are aversive racists may unknowingly exhibit negative nonverbal behaviors (e.g., a high frequency of blinking, physical avoidance, and poor eye contact) that are detectable by minorities (Dovidio et al., 1997; Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2002). Because organizational members are seen as signals of job/organizational attributes (Rynes et al., 1991; Turban et al., 1998), this type of behavior might diminish minority applicants' perceptions of a firm's diversity climate.

In addition, minorities are more attuned to and more accurate in detecting implicit bias than their White counterparts during interracial interactions (Dovidio, Kawakami, Johnson, Johnson, & Howard 1997; Richeson & Shelton, 2005). Work by Dovidio, Kawakami et al. (2002) also sheds light on racioethnic differences in evaluations of interracioethnic interactions. These researchers videotaped White participants interacting with Black confederates and had participants rate their own friendliness during interactions. Confederates also made ratings of participants' friendliness. In addition, outsiders viewed videotapes of the interactions and rated the friendliness of participants' verbal and nonverbal behaviors. The authors found that in interactions with White participants, Black confederates' judgments of participants' friendliness were more strongly correlated with observers' ratings of participants' nonverbal versus verbal behaviors. In contrast, participants' self-evaluations of friendliness were more strongly related to outsiders' ratings of their verbal than nonverbal behaviors. Consequently, White individuals often come away from interracial interactions with more favorable appraisals of interaction quality than their minority counterparts (Dovidio et al., 2002). Because they are less proficient in detecting implicit racioethnic bias in interracial interactions and form the numerical majority in most firms, Whites are less likely to attribute cold or distal behavior to discrimination. Hence:

Proposition 3: Job seeker racioethnicity will moderate the effect of the quality of site visit interactions on organizational diversity climate perceptions. Specifically, the relationship between quality of site visit interactions on organizational diversity climate perceptions will be more strongly positive for minority versus White job seekers.

Quality of community interactions. Intergroup interactions outside of the organization also may influence job seekers' intentions to accept job offers. Quality of community interactions represents the community equivalent to quality of site visit interactions. This factor concerns job seekers' perceptions that the people they meet in a firm's surrounding community treat them in either a congenial or unfriendly manner (summarized across all interactions). Racioethnic discrimination is threatening to identity, suggesting that minorities should be particularly motivated to avoid contexts with a high likelihood of discrimination (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hogg & Terry, 2000). Previous research in the geographic migration area suggests that minorities make relocation decisions based upon expected racioethnic conditions in a community, preferring areas free from racioethnic hostility (Burr et al., 1992; Krysan, 2002). In addition, minorities have greater likelihood of being hired in areas with proportionately higher minority populations (Holzer & Ihlanfeldt, 1996; Stoll, Holzer, & Ihlanfeldt, 2000).

To determine how minority recruits develop quality of community interracioethnic interaction perceptions during site visits, we turn to research by Feagin (1991). He outlined a taxonomy of discriminatory behaviors experienced by middle-class Blacks including verbal insults, avoidance, poor service, and physical harassment (by police and other Whites in the community). During site visits, job candidates may frequent local retail businesses, restaurants, and various entertainment venues. Minorities who experience friendly, courteous treatment in these contexts will develop favorable impressions of an area's diversity climate that will invoke greater desire to accept a job offer from the firm. Because minorities are either proportionately rare or do not comprise the numerical majority in most regions (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000), the quality of interracioethnic interactions in a given community will have greater signaling value to an area's racial conditions among minorities than Whites. Accordingly, unpleasant interactions with members of other races will be less indicative of the region's racial climate among Whites, so long as their group remains in the numerical majority. In those rare locations where they are not (e.g., Detroit), community interracioethnic interactions would be expected to have magnified influence on their community diversity perceptions due to the increased salience of race among them. Indirectly supporting this reasoning, McKay, Avery, and Wilson (2005a) found that Black and White professionals' city racial climate perceptions (i.e., quality of racial

relations in an area) were negatively related to job search intentions among those whose race was proportionately rare in their city of residence (of 21 large U.S. cities).

> *Proposition 4*: Job seeker racioethnicity will moderate the effect of quality of community interactions on community diversity climate perceptions. Specifically, the relationship between quality of community interactions and community diversity climate perceptions will be more strongly positive for minority versus White job seekers.

Individual Differences Moderators

Though the primary purpose of this article is to provide a theoretical rationale for between group (i.e., racioethnic) differences, within-group variance is important as well. Several authors have criticized scholars' tendency to conceptualize racioethnicity in anthropological terms instead of examining within-group differences and their effects on behavior and attitudes (Cox & Nkomo, 1990; Nkomo, 1992; Thomas, Philips, & Brown, 1998). In response to this criticism, we outline a number of individual differences (i.e., racioethnic identity salience, social dominance orientation, and other-group orientation) expected to impact many of the proposed relationships between site visit and location factors, and diversity climate perceptions. Though there may be other potentially relevant variables, these particular moderators were selected because of their general applicability to multiple aspects of our model.

Racioethnic Identity

The distinction between racioethnic identity and racioethnicity is an important one. Racioethnic identity refers to the extent that an individual's self-concept is defined by membership in a particular racioethnic group, the level of attachment felt toward the group, as well as the extent of participation in cultural activities associated with group membership (Phinney, 1992). In contrast, racioethnicity refers simply to a person's social categorization into a particular racioethnic group, without reference to his/her attachment to the group. Strong identification with one's group is related to preference for in-group friendships and membership in same-race social organizations (Chavous, 2000; Ethier & Deaux, 1994; Sellers, Rowley, Chavous, Shelton, & Smith, 1997).

In addition, high identity is associated with heightened salience of racioethnicity (Thompson, 1999), suggesting that group membership is central to the self-concept and highly accessible in memory. This increases the likelihood that strongly identified minorities utilize a racioethnic-based self-schema to encode information and should exhibit greater

awareness of racioethnic conditions (Operario & Fiske, 2001). In support of this notion, Blacks with weak racioethnic identity were less likely to report incidences of discrimination and more influenced by social explanations for persistent injustice than were those who identified strongly (Davidson & Friedman, 1998; Watts & Carter, 1991). Extending these findings suggests that job seekers with strong racioethnic identity may be inclined to challenge majority employees who treat them with indignity. In addition, two studies (Ethier & Deaux, 1994; Saylor & Aries, 1999) reported that high identifying minority students in predominately White universities (perceived as a threat to racioethnic identity) were more likely to seek out membership in minority social organizations to affirm their identity than those with weak racioethnic identification.

Because in-group identification heightens the salience of racioethnicity, high identifiers are apt to more closely follow the racioethnic predictions of the model. This tendency will be more pronounced among minorities because they report significantly stronger racioethnic identification than Whites (Gaines et al., 1997; Phinney, 1992). In fact, racioethnic identity tends to have a different impact on members of the majority than it does on minorities (Larkey & Hecht, 1995; Sidanius, Pratto, & Rabinowitz, 1994). For instance, Sidanius, Pratto, and Bobo (1994) found a positive relationship between ethnic identity and desire for group-based dominance only among White respondents. This indicates that majority members who identify highly seek situations wherein members of their group occupy most, if not all, of the high status positions. In addition, high ethnic identity among White, but not Black, participants was associated with significantly lower levels of satisfaction with interethnic conversations (Larkey & Hecht, 1995). This negative effect was greater when the other party in the conversation was relatively unfamiliar, as would be the case during site visits. We expect, therefore, that the racioethnic differences elicited by encounter demographics and inter-racioethnic interaction quality will be largest between high identifying majority and minority job seekers (see Figure 3a and 3b).

Proposition 5a: Racioethnic identity will moderate the interaction between job seeker racioethnicity and encounter demographics on diversity climate perceptions. Specifically, the relationships between encounter demographics and diversity climate perceptions will be most strongly positive (negative) among minority (majority) job seekers with strong racioethnic identification.

Proposition 5b: Racioethnic identity will moderate the interaction between job seeker racioethnicity and interracioethnic interaction quality on diversity climate perceptions. Specifically, the relationships between inter-racioethnic interaction quality and diversity climate perceptions will be

most strongly positive (negative) among minority (majority) job seekers with strong racioethnic identification.

Social Dominance Orientation

Social dominance theory (Sidanius et al., 1994) posits that societies can be categorized according to the degree to which hierarchies are based on social group membership. Societies wherein hierarchical standing is correlated with membership in social groups (e.g., racioethnicity, gender) are said to be high in social dominance. For instance, if Group A members occupy a disproportionate amount of high power positions relative to members of Groups B and C, the society is high in social dominance. Furthermore, individuals tend to have a preference, known as social dominance orientation (SDO), for particular structural orientations within societies (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle 1994; Sidanius, Levin, Liu, & Pratto, 2000). Those higher in SDO favor societies in which one group enjoys a disproportionately advantaged position relative to all other groups. Conversely, those lower in SDO seek societal arrangements where demographic group membership and hierarchical status are unrelated.

In the present examination, SDO is likely to influence the magnitude of proposed effects regarding organizational (P1) and community diversity vertical integration (P2) on diversity climate perceptions. Minorities who are higher in SDO will be less likely to think poorly of firms in which racioethnic demographic faultlines are encountered because they are favorably predisposed to such inequitable power distributions. Thus, their diversity climate perceptions are apt to be relatively unaffected by encounter demographics and interracioethnic interactions. In fact, one recent study found that minorities high in SDO endorsed viewpoints in opposition to their group's interests and opted for more contact with majority group members than with members of their own group (Neville, Coleman, & Falconer, 2005). Conversely, minorities who are lower in SDO are likely to interpret the inequitable distribution of power and wealth inside and outside of the organization negatively (illustrated in Figure 4a). Furthermore, they are unlikely to prefer contact with out-group members to that with in-group members, as do minorities high in SDO. Thus, the quality of interracioethnic interactions also should have a greater impact among minorities who are low in SDO.

Among majority group members, SDO tends to be correlated highly with general prejudice (Ekehammar, Akrmi, Gylje, & Zakrisson, 2004). In fact, Ekehammer et al. (2004) reported significant correlations between SDO and racism, sexism, and bias against gays and the disabled. Because prejudice heightens the salience of racioethnicity, majority group members who are higher in SDO should be more influenced than

fellow in-group members with lower SDO by encounter demographics and interracioethnic interaction quality (see Figure 4b).

Proposition 6a: SDO will moderate the interaction between job seeker racioethnicity and encounter demographics on diversity climate perceptions. Specifically, the relationship between encounter demographics and diversity climate perceptions will be most strongly positive (negative) among minority (majority) job seekers who are low (high) in SDO.

Proposition 6b: SDO will moderate the interaction between job seeker racioethnicity and interracioethnic interaction quality on diversity climate perceptions. Specifically, the relationship between interracioethnic interaction quality and diversity climate perceptions will be most strongly positive (negative) among minority (majority) job seekers who are low (high) in SDO.

Other-Group Orientation

A third individual difference variable expected to influence job seekers' decision making is other-group orientation. Essentially, other-group orientation (OGO) pertains to how an individual feels about members of other racioethnic groups (Phinney, 1992). The construct encompasses a continuum ranging from avoidance of intergroup contact (low) to those who desire regular intergroup interaction (high). Those low in OGO are likely to value within-group contact more than those high in OGO. Indirectly supporting this reasoning, Wright and Littleford (2002) showed that individuals who encountered positive interracioethnic experiences in the past reported higher OGO than those whose interracioethnic experiences were less favorable.

Both theory and empirical evidence suggest that OGO will influence job seekers' perceptions of diversity cues during site visits. On the one hand, those higher in OGO seek contact with other groups and are apt to look for evidence that opportunities for such contact will exist when evaluating a potential employment context. Those low in OGO, on the other hand, also will be more attuned to diversity cues because of their desires to avoid intergroup contact. Supporting this logic, Avery (2003) found significant three-way interactions between participant race, OGO, and the level of advertisement diversity on organizational attractiveness. The effects of OGO were most easily interpretable for those with lower orientations: Black participants were more, whereas White participant were less attracted to firms as ad diversity increased. This is presumably because these brochures led them to the conclusion that the firm's diversity climate was more welcoming of diversity. For Black job seekers, this may have indicated enhanced opportunity. For White job seekers, it may have represented a greater likelihood of undesired interracial contact. Similarly,

the influence of the diversity cues introduced here should be contingent upon the job seeker's racioethnicity and OGO (see Figure 5a and 5b). Specifically, responses to encounter demographics and interracial interaction quality will be most polarized among those low in OGO with minority job seekers responding affirmatively and White job seekers negatively.

Proposition 7a: OGO will moderate the interaction between job seeker racioethnicity and encounter demographics on diversity climate perceptions. Specifically, the relationship between encounter demographics and diversity climate perceptions will be most strongly positive (negative) among minority (majority) job applicants who are low in OGO.

Proposition 7b: OGO will moderate the interaction between job seeker racioethnicity and interracioethnic interaction quality on diversity climate perceptions. Specifically, the relationship between interracioethnic interaction quality and diversity climate perceptions will be most strongly positive (negative) among minority (majority) job applicants who are low in OGO.

Mediation Effects of Diversity Climate Perceptions

According to our model, applicant racioethnicity, encounter demographics, interracioethnic interaction quality, and the individual difference moderators all affect job acceptance intentions indirectly through their effects on diversity climate perceptions. These predictions are premised on the assumption that site visit factors provide job seekers with information about the diversity climates inside firms and in their surrounding communities. The implication here is that these factors are more meaningful to minority than to majority group members as signals of the racioethnic and social conditions within and outside of firms. Minority job seekers who encounter pleasant organizational and community attributes will develop more favorable diversity climate perceptions, thereby increasing the likelihood that they would accept a position if offered. Conversely, these effects are expected to be weaker among White job applicants because diversity factors are less salient during their job pursuit decisions (Thomas & Wise, 1999).

Proposition 8a: Organizational diversity climate perceptions will mediate the interactive effects of job seeker racioethnicity, organizational site visit factors (i.e., organizational diversity vertical integration and quality of site visit interactions), and individual differences moderators on job acceptance intentions.

Proposition 8b: Community diversity climate perceptions will mediate the interactive effects of job seeker racioethnicity, community site visit factors (i.e., community diversity vertical integration and quality of community interactions), and individual differences moderators on job acceptance intentions.

The Moderating Role of Perceived Job Opportunities

We anticipate that the effects of diversity climate perceptions on job acceptance intentions will depend on applicants' perceptions of job opportunities available to them. Job applicants who perceive plentiful job opportunities will be more confident in their ability to obtain a job. As a result, these individuals may screen job alternatives more stringently than those who feel they lack many job prospects. Supporting this prediction, Cable and Judge (1996) found that those with more perceived job opportunities took longer to accept job offers than those perceiving less employment opportunity. Therefore, we expect job applicants who are confident about their job prospects to scrutinize the diversity climates associated with job openings to a greater extent than applicants who are less confident.

> *Proposition 9a*: Perceived job opportunities will moderate the mediating effects of organizational diversity climate perceptions on job acceptance intentions. Specifically, the relationship between organizational diversity climate perceptions and job acceptance intentions will be most strongly positive among job seekers with high perceived job opportunities.

> *Proposition 9b*: Perceived job opportunities will moderate the mediating effects of community diversity climate perceptions on job acceptance intentions. Specifically, the relationship between community diversity climate perceptions and job acceptance intentions will be most strongly positive among job seekers with high perceived job opportunities.

Research and Practical Implications

We formulated our site visit reactions model with the hope of stimulating theory-based inquiry concerning potential racioethnic differences in reactions to site visit diversity factors. Surprisingly, little research has been devoted to this topic, making it a fruitful area for future inquiry. Accordingly, several implications of our model for scholars and practitioners are discussed below.

Research Implications

Perhaps the most important research implication of our model is that it helps to provide some theoretical clarity in an area that needed it. The existing recruitment literature largely ignored the possibility of racioethnic differences in reactions to site visit attributes, in spite of research demonstrating their likelihood (e.g., Thomas & Wise, 1999). This led many scholars to adopt other demographic frameworks, such as social identity theory, relational demography theory, and the similarity-attraction

paradigm, to guide their empirical inquiry (Avery, 2003; Avery et al., 2004; Goldberg, 2003). Much of this earlier work has been focused upon minority (hierarchical) representation (e.g., Avery, 2003), and equal employment opportunity (EEO) and affirmative action (AA) policy issues germane to early stages of recruitment (Highhouse, Stierwalt, Bachiochi, Elder, & Fisher, 1999; Slaughter, Sinar, & Bachiochi, 2002), to the exclusion of racial conditions encountered within and outside of firms during later job search.

A useful pairing of our model with prior research would be to assess the diversity climate perceptions of job seekers during early phases of recruitment (perhaps induced through depicting racioethnic diversity photographically in recruitment advertisements) and then examine how these initial expectations interact with site visit experiences to impact later job acceptance intentions. Our initial hunch would be that applicants who report highly favorable organizational diversity climate perceptions early in search will respond more negatively to encountering subsequently unpleasant racial conditions in firms than those with initially negative expectations, as expectancy violation theory would suggest (Jussim, Coleman, & Lerch, 1987). The racioethnic model of site visit reactions may be applicable for exploring additional research questions of this nature.

Based on our discussion, a second implication is that community factors should be considered when conducting recruitment research. Reviews of the recruitment literature (Breaugh & Starke, 2000; Rynes, 1991) suggest that it is common practice to ignore the potential effects of these variables on applicant decision making. Our model suggests that racioethnic group membership and community diversity factors could have a considerable impact on an individual's job acceptance intentions. Where possible, scholars should make every effort to account for these variables in the assessment of how individuals select employers.

In our effort to produce a general, comprehensive model of racioethnicity effects on site visit reactions, we proposed similar relationships across minority groups. However, an additional implication of our model is to spur subsequent research on potentially subtle yet important differences among these groups. For instance, differences in the relative impressions of each group could have a considerable impact on the interracioethnic interactions discussed in the model. Some evidence suggests that employer stereotypes about Asians tend to be more favorable than those held concerning Blacks and Hispanics (Bell, 1985; Kirschenman & Neckerman, 1991; Pettigrew & Martin, 1987). Thus, interracioethnic interactions for Asians generally may be more pleasant (i.e., less implicit bias detected) than for other minority groups.

A fourth important research implication is that when studying the effects of racioethnicity, it is important to consider within-group as well as

between-group variance. By focusing exclusively on the between group differences proposed here, one could arrive at the conclusion that organizational and community diversity factors are relatively unimportant to White job seekers in general. Such a conclusion, however, would be erroneous. White job seekers that (a) highly identify with their racioethnicity, (b) are high in SDO, or (c) are low in OGO will be affected considerably by encounter demographics and interracioethnic interaction quality. This extends research demonstrating the effects of these variables during initial applicant attraction (Avery, 2003; Kim & Gelfand, 2003) by suggesting that they are relevant in later stages of job search as well. This is important in light of the paucity of research involving stages of job search other than initial applicant attraction (Breaugh & Starke, 2000).

Scholars who focus on other demographic variables also may find our model useful. Regarding the organizational context, our encounter demographics and interracioethnic interaction quality concepts could apply to gender and age. In fact, previous OBHRM research provided some limited evidence that gender (Rynes et al., 1991) and age demography (O'Reilly, Caldwell, & Barnett, 1989; Tsui et al., 1992) in firms influence job choice and turnover decisions, respectively. The most useful extension of our model to women would be to examine the effects of organizational gender vertical integration on their job acceptance intentions, given their under-representation in upper-management positions (Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990; Ragins, 1997). The quality of interactions experienced in firms may be somewhat less relevant to women because people generally have greater cross-gender than cross-racial contact (Eberhardt & Fiske, 1994). Moreover, age discrimination research has shown that negative stereotypes of older adults exist, such as the notion of unwillingness to learn new things (Burke, Finkelstein, & Raju, 1995). Negative stereotypes of this nature could have import for how older adults are treated in interactions when visiting work sites. Older adults are projected to be a valuable labor source during the current decade (Doverspike et al., 2000); therefore, future researchers should examine interaction quality effects on older applicants' job acceptance intentions.

Finally, the racioethnic model of job search specified four important individual difference moderators with potential effects on job search. We acknowledge that there may be others that influence the nature of relationships posited within our model. One such variable is career identity salience, or the degree to which one's career goals and success forms a central portion of the self-concept (Honeycutt & Rosen, 1997; Lobel & Clair, 1992). High career identity salience denotes a person who invests more effort in advancing one's career relative to other potentially competing concerns such as attending to nonwork family matters. Those higher in career identity salience tend to act in the best interests of their career,

even at the expense of other potentially important factors (Honeycutt & Rosen, 1997; Lobel & Clair, 1992). Accordingly, high levels of career identity salience could lessen the impact of the diversity climate cues in our model, especially among minorities. A second plausible additional moderator is extraversion. Extraversion is a personality trait that refers to the extent that a person is outgoing, talkative, active, and assertive with others (Digman, 1990; McCrae & John, 1992). People who are high in extraversion (i.e., extraverts) prefer work and nonwork contexts that provide high opportunities for social interaction, more so than those who are low on this trait (i.e., introverts; Emmons, Diener, & Larson, 1986; Mount, Barrick, Scullen, & Rounds, 2005). Because of this, extraverts are likely to place greater emphasis on quality of interracioethnic interactions in forming their diversity climate perceptions and subsequent job acceptance intentions. Encounter demographics may be important as well because people prefer social contact with similar others (Mehra, Kilduff, & Brass, 1998). Future investigators may wish to extend our theory by examining the influence of these additional moderators on the relationships depicted in the model.

Practical Implications

In addition to the research implications, our model has a number of applications in organizations. A primary implication is that minority recruitment may be more difficult and complex than initially believed. If existing research is indicative of practical knowledge on the topic, it seems to imply that placing pictures of smiling, racioethnically diverse employees on recruitment brochures, employing minority recruiters/interviewers, and espousing undying support of EEO/AA policies are answers to the minority recruitment dilemma that firms face (Doverspike et al., 2000; Laabs, 1991). We contend that these are superficial approaches geared toward numerical minority recruitment targets and are less attendant to the more pressing issue: How can firms make themselves more welcoming to these underrepresented applicant groups? Ultimately, when they arrive onsite, applicants will call the organization's bluff on the implied promises of a warm diversity climate made during early recruitment. Importantly, our model articulates some of the key issues that organizations should address to make themselves more attractive to minority job candidates.

A second implication is that organizations must address the interracioethnic relations inherent in their work climates to ensure that minority job applicants experience amicable social relations during site visits. Before embarking upon minority recruitment initiatives, we suggest that firms conduct diversity audits to survey employees' attitudes toward diversity (McKay & Avery, 2005). When feasible, particular attention should

be paid to minority employees' survey responses as these might provide insights into existing interracioethnic relations in the organization from a minority perspective. Work units that are identified as being resistant to diversity should be required to attend some form of diversity training. At a minimum, the training should include some discussion of the unconscious biases that can be transmitted during interracioethnic interactions and how these lead to discriminatory behavior (Ferdman & Brody, 1996).

At a more global strategic level, organizations should realize that location matters. We are not the first to articulate this issue, as there are studies illustrating that firms make strategic decisions to locate in areas with attractive amenities to increase their effectiveness in hiring key personnel (Glaser & Bardo, 1991; Grainger & Blomquist, 1999). Prior recruitment work, however, has not provided a fine-grained analysis of *how* location factors may affect job acceptance intentions or *which* aspects would be most important, especially in regards to maintaining interest among minority job seekers. We suggest that firms strategically select their locations if they hope to attract diverse workforces. When this is not possible, they should invest in learning how to market their locations as a part of marketing their firms' employment opportunities.

The preceding implications suggest that there may be severe limitations on minority recruitment effectiveness for some firms. Organizations that are located in racially noxious environments may never build a racioethnically diverse workforce. Furthermore, those individuals who unknowingly accept positions in such places are likely to turnover. Large waves of minority turnover have negative financial ramifications for firms that invest heavily in minority recruitment initiatives (McKay & Avery, 2005). In addition, minority retention may be problematic in places where these groups are proportionally rare because low social density is associated with poor social support and reduced psychological well-being (Halpern, 1993; Kuo & Tsai, 1986). Nonetheless, a recent study of how community amenities affect workplace satisfaction (i.e., satisfaction with one's job and organization) showed that minority employees (but not Whites) were more satisfied when they perceived community amenities (e.g., schools, entertainment opportunities, etc.) as high in quality (McKay, Avery, & Wilson, 2005b). It appears that enjoyable activities outside of work help to attach workers to their organizations, a notion that may be usefully applied to applicants. That is, firms should emphasize the favorable amenities offered by their locations during recruitment to offset any negative aspects.

Conclusions

Our model of site visit reactions takes a necessary first step toward unraveling the role of racioethnicity in applicant decision making during later

stages of recruitment. It is important for scholars and practitioners alike not to assume that traditional job and organizational factors alone precipitate continued interest in positions. Minority job seekers, typically underrepresented in most organizational contexts, must contend with racioethnic issues inside and outside of firms that their White counterparts do not. Because of this, the existing organizational literature provides little guidance on how racioethnicity could impact reactions to site visits. We hope that our model and its accompanying theory-based propositions will spur future research on majority–minority differences in site visit reactions.

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